

UNDER THE IMMEDIATE PATRONAGE OF

WEER MOST GRACIOUS MADESTY,
AND HER R. H. THE DUCKESS OF KENT.

# THE MUSICAL WORLD,

A WEEKLY RECORD OF

Musical Science, Literature, and Entelligence.

To know the cause why music was ordained;
Was it not to refresh the mind of man,
After his studies or his usual pain?
Then give me leave to read philosophy,
And, while I pause, serve in your harmony.
TAMING OF THE SHREW.

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THE Exeter Hall Sacred Harmonic Society has, by its prodigious achievements in the performance of choral music, assumed a degree of national importance, which cannot be easily measured, and ought not to be lightly esteemed. When the magnitude of the original enterprize, the undeniable excellence of its objects, the industry and talent collected together for their developement, and the solid encouragement, and triumphant approval, which have hitherto attended their execution, receive the attentive consideration they justly merit, every lover of the art, in its highest and noblest department, must breathe an ardent wish that the labours of this numerous band of musical patriots may be perpetual, and that corresponding success may crown their honourable exertions. Like the Philharmonic Society, this association possesses a well-spring of vitality, in its admirable adaptation of efficient means to worthy ends, which promises as permanent an existence as we can hope for, in the ever-fluctuating character of human institutions. May no petty quarrels, which too frequently (may we not say invariably?) lead to rancorous dissentions, generate the seeds of decay, and terminate in the dissolution of a society formed to instruct, to persuade, and to allure the fellow-citizens of its members, to the cultivation of a science which, like virtue, is its own reward; which cherishes and ennobles the tenderest sensibilities; and which experience, as well as poetry, assures us is able to soften the asperities, and elevate the best affections of humanity.

As the Philharmonic Society is the aggregation of the élite of the profession, so the meeting in the orchestra of Exeter Hall is the assemblage of all the minor choral associations of the metropolis. The object and end of both are the same—the selection of the finest specimens in their respective branches of the art; and their performance in a style of the most finished excellence. In either case, the bond of union is the effect of their performances on the public mind and the vol. VIII.—NEW SERIES, VOL. I.

secret of their success lies in the magic charm which arises from a community of feeling, a community of knowledge, and a mutual determination to attain a desirable end, without reference to individual supremacy.

During three years, the Sacred Harmonic Society enjoyed little superior distinction beyond its numerous contemporary associations, was but a brook flowing onwards in a gentle, though continuous, current, seeking some kindred rivulets, with which to blend its waters into a mighty and majestic river. But the experimental concert given for the benefit of a charity, in the large room, which is, par eminence, denominated Exeren Hall, on the 28th June, 1836, satisfactorily decided that, once congregate together the amateurs of the metropolis, and marshal them under experienced leaders, there was gained a power of attraction, which defied doubt, and disarmed malevolence and misapprehension, as to the certainty of eventual success. From that day the Exeter Hall Society became a point of centralization; an all-absorbing focus, which attracted every minor light; a majestic ocean, receiving every tributary stream. As the smaller societies increased, so in proportion did the prosperity of the Exeter Hall, which may be considered the union of the metropolitan choral societies. Its members have now a hallowed sceptre within their grasp; the genius of choral music is under their protection. Amateurs increase with the increasing love of sacred music; that style which it has been the glory of Britain to bring to perfection, through the mighty workings of her children, and of her great adopted son. The amateurs alone have the power of presenting them in all their glorious proportions, at an expense involving no risk and no uncertainty.

And now, in the season of prosperity, may we suggest a word of advice to the members of this noble association. You have reached the haven of success. Change not your plans, from the mere love of alteration; let those, who have borne the heat and burden of the day, now remain to cull some of the sweets, the result of anxious solicitude, and unremitting exertion; distrust not those who have suffered in times of doubt, and almost desperation; who have fought the good fight; who have not been slow to unloose their purse-strings, or to sacrifice their time; but let them continue to dwell in friendly and unreserved communion, under your vines and fig trees, basking in the genial warmth of well-earned and well-merited success.

You have grown out of the small societies; you are armed, four-square, with a sacred band of choristers, men good and true, who demonstrate that the results of weekly choral practice, is the attainment of comparative perfection. You have a fund in hand; and the means always at command to increase your resources. That fund originates from the faithful and unchanging affection, which the English people bear for the great school of Protestant choral composition. Trifle not, then, with these hallowed feelings; but stretch forth your hands with stedfastness of purpose, and unshaken loyalty of heart, to perform that grateful duty, which has devolved upon you. Waste not your strength on that which is naught; and be well assured, that the semi-operatic music of the Roman Catholic Church is but a meagre substitute for the strong meat of our fathers. Mozart shines least in his masses; they were too often the result of confined means, and a sad neces-

sity to pamper to depraved taste. You have tried an experiment in bringing into juxta-position the twelfth mass of Mozart with the choral hymn, "We praise Thee, O God," of Handel; and you must confess, the Lutheran brooks no rival

The means of improving the national taste, of enlarging the knowledge of the public, of changing the character of the long celebrated Ancient Concerts, of directing the provincial grand festivals, of acquiring a bright reputation, seen and testified of all, are within your power; and to all these things may be added, a store of worldly goods. Produce the Protestant music of England and Germany; when this task is accomplished, you may look up the early chapel school of the Flemings, the Roman, Venetian, and first Neapolitan masters. As the Vocal Society revived the taste for madrigals, the bright creations of the Elizbethan era, by publishing them in parts, so do you with the Lutherans, Handel and Bach; the churchmen of old, Gibbons, Purcel, Croft, Greene, and their disciples, Boyce, Battishill, and Wesley. Seek not the accumulation of scores, heterogeneous in their character, and useless for your purposes. Purchase not a library; but let it be said, to your imperishable honour, that you have created one. Publish yourselves, or lead by your patronage, to the publication of the secret gems in Handel's glorious coronet. Bring forth the parts of Deborah, Theodora, the Chandos Anthems, the choice choruses, here and there scattered through his voluminous oratorio compositions.

Remember, that one of Germany's best informed amateurs has written this memorable truth:-" Of the two fundamental pillars of German musical art, the French and the Italians know neither; and the English only one, that is Handel. When they shall equally appreciate the second giant, the Michael Angelo of his age, John Sebastian Bach, and not before, they will stand so firmly, that the swell of the new fangled torrent will not be able to overthrow and carry them away." Recollect also, that Germany's greatest living choral writer, Mendelssohn, has said of you, that you have no rival; that "Germany cannot boast of any Choral Society, like that of Exeter Hall."\* Can it become you to shut your eyes, and close your ears to the stupendous harmonies, which characterise the litanies, motetts, and services of this great Protestant composer? Think you, that your production of Bach's Messiah should be neglected? that the double choruses, and double orchestras, of the co-equal with Handel, in inspiration, would meet with no sympathy? Have you not prepared the public mind for the reception of these wonders? We think you have.

We live in an age, when there is much talk of Gibbons, and Purcel, and unfortunately nothing more. We prate idly about these heroes, who composed magnificent specimens of choral music, only to be properly developed by a performance in vocal masses; and we end this senseless gabble with performing Beethoven's "Mount of

<sup>•</sup> We insert the following extract from a letter by M. Mendelssohn, addressed to the Committee a few days after the performance of the Oratorio of St. Paul at Exeter Hall.

"I can hardly express the gratification I felt in hearing my work performed in so beautiful a manner—indeed I shall never wish to hear some parts of it better executed than they were on that night. The power of the choruses,—this large body of good and musical voices,—and the style in which they sang the whole of my music, gave me the highest and most heart-felt treat: while I thought on the immense improvement which such a number of real amateurs must necessarily produce in the country which may boast of it. It is for these gratifying feelings, I wish to express my thanks to the committee of this society, and I shall never forget the manner in which they performed my oratorio, and the kind and most honouring reception I met with from the Sacred Harmonic Society."

Olives," or Spohr's "Last Judgment;" music requiring instrumental masses. Thus we resign our pure healthy vocal composers for a set of aliens, clothed in a garb foreign to our tastes, and conventional habits. Leave Spohr alone: if Beethoven is to be attacked, take him in the maturity of his genius-at a period when he was striving to combine the involuted form of the ancients, with the highly coloured outline of the moderns. The missa in D is essentially a choral work of the grandest form, the most intellectual, the least sensuous of any production, Beethoven ever put on paper. Use it then, if at all, as a vocal composition for a double choir, throw out the soli character of the missa, and, to speak technically, we are assured it will go.

But to return from digression. The choral music of England is essentially the adaptation of sublime thoughts, to vocal expression. The anthems " Hosanna to the Son of David," "Almighty and everlasting God," by Gibbons; "O Lord God of Hosts," "O God, thou hast cast us out," "O Lord, thou art my God," " O give thanks," of Henry Purcel; "God is gone up with a merry noise," "We will rejoice," of Croft; "God is our hope and strength," "O clap your hands," "I will sing of thy power," by Greene; "Lord, thou hast been our refuge," "O give thanks," " Turn thee unto me," " By the waters of Babylon," by Boyce; "Call to remembrance," by Battishill; "Dixit Dominus," "In exitu Israel," "Exultate Deo," "Tu es sacerdos," "Te decet hymnus," by Wesley; are to be considered more essentially the objects of regard in vocal societies, than any mass which was ever written in modern times. These are the works to render English composers illustrious, and renowned on the Continent. Let foreigners, no longer, taunt us that we have no school of composition. Let them enter Exeter Hall, and hear English compositions, sung by English singers, played by English performers,\* If it were not for our cathedral writers, Handel would not have been the Handel of the oratorio, the composer of the Israel in Egypt, the Messiah, Judas Maccabeus, Sampson, or any other of his great oratorios.

The members of the Sacred Harmonic Society are associated in a cause which engages our warmest and best wishes; and our heart-felt desire is, that their operations may continue to be carried on in a spirit of unity and peace.

#### THE GLEE CLUB.

BY JOHN PARRY.

In the year 1783, a gentleman of the name of Robert Smith, residing in St. Paul's Church Yard, commenced to give musical entertainments at his house to a few professors and amateurs, who used to sing motets, madrigals, glees, canons, and catches, after dinner. Among the harmonious party was Dr. Bever, who possessed a most valuable musical library, from which he supplied them with some rare compositions of the old masters, and he (as well as several others,) invited the party to his residence, in turn.

This was continued until the year 1787, when it was resolved to establish a

society, to be called the Glee Club, (in contradistinction, I conclude, to the Catch

<sup>\*</sup> Some of the anthems enumerated have been adapted to orchestral accompaniments, in a masterly manner, by Mr. Kearns, and performed at the Ancient Concerts and Annual Pestivals. He has been honoured with the high compliments of a Weber and a Mendelsohn. The way in which he made Handel speak out at the last Birmingham Festival was as remarkable as it was judicious. The greatest compliment which could have been paid him, he received not this occasion: the major portion of auditors and performers thought they were listening notely to Handel's scores.

Club;) and the first public meeting took place at the Newcastle Coffee House, on

Saturday, December 22nd, 1787.

The following were the original members:—R. Smith, Esq., Dr. Arnold, Dr. Bever, Rev. Josiah Hinckes, T. S. (afterwards Dr.) Dupuis, J. Roberts, J. Heseltine, T. Aylward, C. Wright, T. Gregory, H. Desdier, L. Atterbury, and T. Linley, Esquires. The professional members were Mr. S. Webbe, Mr. John Dyne, Mr. P. Hobler, Mr. J. W. (afterwards Dr.) Callcott, Mr. J. Hindle, Mr. J. Bartleman, Mr. S. Webbe, Junior, and Mr. Samuel Harrison. In 1788, the club removed to the Freemasons' Tavern; but, in consequence of that house undergoing some repairs, the society removed to the Crown and Anchor, where it continued until February, 1790, when it returned to the Freemasons' Tavern; but owing to the want of a proper sized room, the club removed once more to the Crown and Anchor, on the 6th of July, 1791. After these various removals, and when they considered themselves permanently established, Mr. Samuel Webbe wrote and composed his celebrated glee of "Glorious Apollo," the first stanza of which is as follows:—

"Glorious Apollo from on high beheld us,
Wandering to find a temple for his praise,
Sent Polyhymnia hither to shield us,
While we ourselves such a structure might raise.
Thus then combining,
Hands and hearts joining,
Sing we in harmony, Apollo's praise.

Ever since 1790, this glee has been always sung, after the toast of "Prosperity to the Glee Club," each part is first sung by three voices, then in full chorus.

the Glee Club," each part is first sung by three voices, then in full chorus. Having mentioned Webbe's catch of "Would you know my Celia's charms," in the account of the Catch Club, perhaps an analization of it will be acceptable, the words run thus:—

"Would you know my Celia's charms, Which now excite my fletce alarms; I'm sure she 'as fortitude and truth To gain the heart of any youth. She'as only thirty lovers now, The rest are gone, I can't tell how. No longer Celia ought to strive, For certainly she's fifty-five."

The effect produced in singing this catch is most ludicrous; for, one voice makes fortitude sound like forty-two, when another sharply cries out, "She's only thirty;" then comes in, with an authoritive tone, a third voice, stating—"She's fifty-five," and, by accelerating the time, it becomes an apparent dispute, as to the proper age of poor Celia.

In the years 1790 and 1791, the club gave a dinner at the Freemasons' Tavern, to which ladies were invited, at which the glee of "Glorious Apollo" was sung, with a fine effect, by the members and a host of auxiliaries, after which, it became exceedingly popular, and I imagine that there is not a musical society in the

united kingdom, at which it has not been repeatedly sung.

The number of members was limited to thirty, and the honorary members to thirteen; the latter have been increased to fifteen, and there are, besides, seven perpetual musical visitors. The subscribing members pay three guineas entrance fee, and ten guineas annual subscription; the club dines ten times in the course of the season, commencing on the second Saturday in December, and from January to May, on alternate Saturdays. In the year 1803, the late Stephen Groombridge, Esq., was elected President of the Club, an office which he held with great credit to himself and advantage to the society, until the year 1828, when he was obliged to resign, in consequence of the bad state of his health, and he was succeeded by the present worthy chairman, John Capel, Esq.

The club, and several individual members, have given a number of prizes for the best approved glees, but the candidates have been generally confined to the honorary members, who now consist of Messrs. Horsley, (vice president) Hawes, (conductor) Bellamy, (sub conductor) C. S. Evans, (secretary) J. B. Sale, J. Elliott, R. Clark, J. Terrail, J. King, J. Blackbourn, H. Goulden, T. F. Walmisley, J. W. Hobbs, T. Cooke, E. Fitzwilliam. Perpetual visitors, Messrs. J. K. Pyne, U. Collyer, J. O. Atkins, W. Foster, H. R. Michelmore, O. Bradbury, and E. Hawkins. At the meetings of the club, when the cloth is removed, Non Nobis is

finely sung, and frequently followed by Dr. Cooke's splendid canon—" Amen." After the health of the sovereign and the royal family, follows "Prosperity to the Glee Club," then Glorious Apollo is sung, as already stated; after that, the Chairman, Vice Chairman, Conductor, Sub Conductor, and Secretary, name a glee each; then the members, according to seniority, call for a glee. Within these few years, songs have been introduced, also instrumental performances. The late Samuel Wesley used to delight the company with his matchless execution of Sebastian Bach's Fugues on the pianoforte, or an extemporaneous effusion on a given subject, frequently some conspicuous passage in a glee recently sung. Moscheles and Mendelssohn have also displayed their masterly talents on various occasions, (as well as many other eminent professors) at this club, which has for its object, the cultivation of the composition and performance of vocal part music; and, most especially, the promotion of harmony and good fellowship among the sons of song, and the lovers of the concord of sweet sounds.

Although ladies are not admitted to the festive board, they are never forgotten; for the chairman names most of the favourite songstresses of the day, to whose

health, many a sparkling bumper is devoted.

"At beauty's shrine they bend the knee, And smiling wear love's silken chains; Each social son of harmony To her he loves, the goblet drains."

What has been said in favour of the Catch Club, is equally applicable to this society; and, although it cannot boast of having enrolled on its list of members the "names of kings and the sons of kings," it may proudly state that it has done every thing in its power to fulfil the objects for which it was established; and, moreover, it has ever fostered and patronized native talent. The gentlemanly demeanour of the president and the members towards the musical professors, is not the least honourable trait in the character of this club, and the seventh law is observed to the very letter, viz.—"That the honorary members are, in all respects, upon an equality with the subscribing members." Since 1787, to the present time, there have been about one hundred and seventy subscribing members, the senior living, being William Laforest, Esq., who was elected in 1804. The honorary treasurer is William Hasledine Pepys, Esq., F.R.S. Mr. J. B. Sale (who was elected in 1797,) is the senior honorary member, of whom there have been about sixty, from the commencement, including most of the eminent vocalists of their day; many of whom have been gathered to their fathers. Of the club I say—

Esto Perpetua.

[A Sketch of the Royal Society of Musicians will be given next week.]

#### MEMOIR OF MADEMOISELLE SCHEBEST.

Mademoiselle Agnes Schebest, who has gained so high a reputation on the Continent, and recently arrived in Paris, was born at Vienna, in February, 1815, and is, consequently, entering her twenty-fourth year. Her father was an Austrian soldier, and during her childhood she accompanied him from place to place; and she is said to have drawn from the lovely climate of Italy, her attachment for singing, and her vocation for the art. She made her first appearance at Dresden, in minor parts, and very much strengthened her powers by chorus singing. At seventeen she began to display talents of the highest order, and has since excited an extraordinary sensation wherever she has appeared.

Her voice is a mezzo soprano, the compass of which is properly two octaves; but an organ like hers is rare indeed. Its effect is greatly assisted by the enthusiasm of her own spirit, the attraction of her manner, and the beauty of her

appearance.

Ansani, who was the primo tenore at the opera, before Pacchierotti in 1780 was not only the most irritable of mortals, but was joined to a wife, Signora Maccherini, who was a most desperate virago. These worthies have been known if one happened to be applauded more than the other, mutually to employ persons to hiss the successful rival.



#### ON THE WORDS BEST ADAPTED FOR SONGS.

It is a frequent complaint that there is a great deficiency of poems that are thoroughly adapted to the purpose of the musician, and that we often see a beautiful melody almost lost on account of the want of meaning in the words to which it is allied. The mutual relation between words and sound necessary to produce a perfect result, is an interesting and not unimportant subject to the composer of

lyrical music.

The first essential of lyric poetry, nay its very essence, is feeling. What is song but the expression of the heart's overflowings? It reveals to us the inward life and deep working of the poet's breast; and has only to do with the external world in so far as this depicts the impression made by it on his soul. There can be little doubt that this kind of poetry originated in the love cherished by the one sex towards the other; feelings broke out into verse, and spoke the language of the heart. Indeed, we are told by Burns himself, the prince of lyrical composers, that he never had the least inclination of turning poet till he got heartily in love, and then rhyme and song were the spontaneous language of his heart,—a heart that

glowed with what he describes as "honest warm simplicity.

In order to rekindle in another bosom the feeling of his own, the poet should be careful not to step from his own sphere into that of the philosopher. This is a very common error, and one, at the same time, frequently overlooked; because the lyric form employed by the writer, is apt to lead away the mind from the ideas themselves; and at the first glance, mistaking the form for the substance, we look upon the song as a genuine lyric. It is, indeed, the lamentable fate of art in general, that the just proportion between idea and form, which is the true and sole indication of the hand of a master, is so rarely to be met with. Forms are retained which acquire by time a sort of independent existence, so that at length they represent only, instead of convey the thing signified. Thus many composers are deceived, and place a set of skilfully arranged rhymes, destitute of all feeling, under their notes, and wonder afterwards that their composition produces no effect; forgetting that what does not issue from the heart, can never reach it.

While we lay down, as a first principle, that the understanding or judgment must not gain the upper hand in a lyric, we are far from affirming that it is to have no jurisdiction there. Instances are not wanting, in which the feeling of the poet appears to have run away with his common sense. The flow of his conceptions must be agreeable to reason, though not deductions from it, for this is the principle by which all emotions are brought into unison. The imagination has its seat

(or ought to have it,) within the circle of reason.

Of the kind of poetry called didactie, we will only observe that it is most unfit for musical accompaniment. And there are songs of another class, which are little better adapted to it; those in which the picturesque predominates, a species of descriptive rather than lyrical poetry. They engross the fancy too much, and do not leave sufficient scope for the musical ideas. The imagination too, is more occupied with what regards the eye than the ear, and thus unity is destroyed. In short, the words do not require music, and they gain nothing by the addition.

It may, indeed, be laid down as an axiom, that those words are most appropriate to musical accompaniment, which most require its aid. Such poetry, without music, exists only by halves. The genuine lyric is formed for singing, and its meaning and strength fully understood only when it is sung. An intelligent person may declare he understands a poem of this kind, because he finds nothing nonsensical in it, who may yet possess nothing but the shell without the kernel; for when sung it is not merely to be understood, but to penetrate his whole being. And this impression ought to be simple, not mixed up with truths to be learned, or pictures, however beautiful, of natural objects. Refinements of measure too, are to be avoided, and the repetition of complicated rhymes, for these cramp the musical accompaniment.

The lyric, flowing from the heart, simple in its measure, neat in its rhymes, possessing the principle of music in its expression before it becomes a song, is that best adapted to the composer. Our best poets have almost all attempted song, and have too frequently failed, while those who have been generally spoken of as second rate authors, have, without exception, the most lyrical turn of thought and ex-

pression. People are too apt to consider a song as a trifle, not remembering the compression, simplicity, pathos, and music, requisite for an author to excel in a very difficult department of genius. Burns has said that those who consider a good song as a trifle easy to be written, should set themselves down and try.

It would be interesting to recur to some of the best examples of lyric poetry in our own country, and institute a comparison between that of England, Scotland,

and Ireland; but this may be attempted in a future number.

One observation may be made on the division of a song into stanzas, which ought not to be overlooked in the choice of words for music. An expressive and emphatic syllable frequently occurs in one verse, which in the corresponding portion of the following, is wholly wanting. The music is altered to accommodate it, and the character of the song is lost. The ideas, in a little poem of this kind, should possess a symmetry corresponding to the form of the stanza, and unity be maintained throughout. Genuine ease and native simplicity form the foundation whence melody springs. Touching the heart of the musician, he will then present a reflection of the beauty and grace of the poem derived from his own art. It should be short, offering sufficient scope to the fancy, and allowing the composer to repeat single words again and again. From such elements have arisen compositions, which, on account of their apparent insignificance and narrow compass, are by many neglected, and yet, by those who enter into their spirit, they are vainly imitated. They will never perish, for time will lend them fresh fervour and fresh beauty.\*

#### REVIEWS.

Overture to the Naiades, performed at the Philharmonic Concerts, Pianoforte Duct, by W. Sterndale Bennett. COVENTRY & HOLLIER.

William Sterndale Bennett is the disciple of Mendelssohn. He has studied the harmonious volume of the art, in a bright unclouded atmosphere; and has kept his brain cool, neither too busy, nor too volatile, to think. He is not one of those who raise a mighty rout, and travel in a ceaseless whirl of mysticism; neither seeks he in the vast, the wild, or the wonderful, a resistless splendigur, which strong in its own strength, sets at nought the conventional forms adopted by preceding classic composers. The genius of this accomplished artist appears "a phantom of delight," uniting, with a winning playfulness, a feminine softness, a caressing tenderness, which twine round the heart a light maze of undefined bliss; a form of harmony, grace, and gentlest beauty, but withal grave, and lovely in its repose, as sunlight in the evening hour. His style evinces a beautiful, and enchanting simplicity, which may be called meek-eyed: we generally find him start with a few artless notes, a simple sweet beguiling melody, a soft and soul-like strain, which without apparent design or effort, melts into every variety of shade, yet forming one serene and perfect whole. He has won the love and esteem of his master, embraced his pure behests; and like his archetype, he gathers together the thoughts and the things which time has long since snatched from the grasp of the vain and thoughtless, but vouchsafes to resign to the care and keeping of those who "sing at the heart's command."

Mr. Bennett, without cramping his generous powers, without tying himself down to the servile forms of custom, or sitting with folded hands in the sty of plagiarism, has evidently moulded his conceptions after the manner of Mendelssohn: and as we look on him as the herald of a mighty band, a joyous train now about to wreath fresh laurels to the musical honour of our country, we beg to draw the attention of our readers to this peculiarly elegant composition. But in so doing, we will first revert to the orchestral compositions of his model.

These reveal a new perception of the beau ideal, which may be traced from the happy mode adopted in his musical education. Unlike the composers of the present day, he was early initiated in the severities of the grand school. The music of the mind, the language of the soul, as found in the pages of a Bach, was the strong meat of his childhood. Here are no meretricious graces, no clustering

<sup>\*</sup> Whether or not it has been the deficiency of suitable words, that has led to the introduction of a new style of music, need not here be discussed. The Lieder ohne Wirte of Mendelssohn, are, in every sense, the production of a master mind.

ornaments; but all, as free from ostentation as from weakness, stands majestically conspicuous in its own purity—its simple solemnity. From these studies he perceived the necessity of a solid foundation and clear superstructure, and contracted a love of symmetrical design, and perfect keeping from beginning to end. To these characteristics he has blended the exquisite beauties of Beethoven and Weber, without adopting, however, the elaborate detail of the one, or the wayward manerism of the other. He calls into action the broad masses of Beethoven, the elegant and fairy like melody of Weber, but amalgamates with them a contrapuntal dignity which, although inwoven, is ever bold and clear in its proportions. The overture to "The Knight and Mermaid," is perhaps the most perfect specimen of his secular style of composition, an overture which, we presume, suggested to Mr. Fennett the subject of the composition now under review.

It demanded an imagination, not distrustful of its powers, to conjure up the revels of the Naiades, those gnomes who, "with sedged crowns, and ever harm-

less looks,"

"——meet on hill, in dale, forest, or mead, By fancied fountains, or by rushy brook, Or on the beached margent of the sea, To dance their ringlets to the whistling wind."

### But Mr. Bennett, with the hand of an enchanter, has summoned up

"A most majestic vision, and Harmonious charmingly."

The perfect calm, the solemn stillness, with which the movement opens, is judiciously contrasted with the delicate motivo, depicting the sportive playsomeness of the nymphs, as they come forth in bright and joyous array. The gradual chiara oscura prepares the mind for the delineation of the passing storm, and is fancifully

conceived, and felicitously pourtrayed.

The episode of the storm—the change from the still evening of summer, in its silence eloquent, to that of the chafed winds, the mantling clouds, the sweeping burricane, and muttering lour of the thunder, reminds us of a similar scene in Mendelssohn's overture to "The Hebrides." The return to nature in her best and balmiest hour, introduces a charming and flowing melody (the cautabile at page 7), which is still more vividly brought out at page 9, in the superstructure, the under subject meandering through the harmonies in quavers. At page 21 is a very clever use of contrapuntal imitation, in conversion, which, indeed, is similar in idea and treatment to the cantabile in the slow movement of Mendelssohn's symphony in C minor. The succession of harmonies at page 13 (four bars from the end), although not orthodox in position, are extremely effective. One of the best points however in the overture, will be found at page 14, bar 17. The iteration of the subject against the bass, with reversed accents in syncopation, bound together with the ingenious harmony in the motivo infra, displays much science, and a just appreciation of the powers of an orchestra.

Mr. Bennett is in "the foliage of his youth;" and when we look on the growth he has already attained, the fruit of maturer years may be expected to furnish a rich harvest of satisfaction to himself and his numerous admirers. He must have been highly gratified at the flattering reception which this production has met with from all classes of musicians; and if he relax not in his efforts, few, if any, of his contemporaries, can boast of a wider, or more extended prospect of success.

#### METROPOLITAN CONCERTS.

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pression. People are too apt to consider a song as a trifle, not remembering the compression, simplicity, pathos, and music, requisite for an author to excel in a very difficult department of genius. Burns has said that those who consider a good song as a trifle easy to be written, should set themselves down and try.

It would be interesting to recur to some of the best examples of lyric poetry in our own country, and institute a comparison between that of England, Scotland,

and Ireland; but this may be attempted in a future number.

One observation may be made on the division of a song into stanzas, which ought not to be overlooked in the choice of words for music. An expressive and emphatic syllable frequently occurs in one verse, which in the corresponding portion of the following, is wholly wanting. The music is altered to accommodate it, and the character of the song is lost. The ideas, in a little poem of this kind, should possess a symmetry corresponding to the form of the stanza, and unity be maintained throughout. Genuine ease and native simplicity form the foundation whence melody springs. Touching the heart of the musician, he will then present a reflection of the beauty and grace of the poem derived from his own art. It should be short, offering sufficient scope to the fancy, and allowing the composer to repeat single words again and again. From such elements have arisen compositions, which, on account of their apparent insignificance and narrow compass, are by many neglected, and yet, by those who enter into their spirit, they are vainly imitated. They will never perish, for time will lend them fresh fervour and fresh beauty.\*

#### REVIEWS.

Overture to the Naiades, performed at the Philharmonic Concerts, Pianoforte Duet, by W. Sterndale Bennett. COVENTRY & HOLLIER.

William Sterndale Bennett is the disciple of Mendelssohn. He has studied the harmonious volume of the art, in a bright unclouded atmosphere; and has kept his brain cool, neither too busy, nor too volatile, to think. He is not one of those who raise a mighty rout, and travel in a ceaseless whirl of mysticism; neither seeks he in the vast, the wild, or the wonderful, a resistless splendour, which strong in its own strength, sets at nought the conventional forms adopted by preceding classic composers. The genius of this accomplished artist appears " a phantom of delight," uniting, with a winning playfulness, a feminine softness, a caressing tenderness, which twine round the heart a light maze of undefined bliss; a form of harmony, grace, and gentlest beauty, but withal grave, and lovely in its repose, as sunlight in the evening hour. His style evinces a beautiful, and enchanting simplicity, which may be called meek-eyed: we generally find him start with a few artless notes, a simple sweet beguiling melody, a soft and soul-like strain, which without apparent design or effort, melts into every variety of shade, yet forming one serene and perfect whole. He has won the love and esteem of his master, embraced his pure behests; and like his archetype, he gathers together the thoughts and the things which time has long since snatched from the grasp of the vain and thoughtless, but vouchsafes to resign to the care and keeping of those who "sing at the heart's command.'

Mr. Bennett, without cramping his generous powers, without tying himself down to the servile forms of custom, or sitting with folded hands in the sty of plagiarism, has evidently moulded his conceptions after the manner of Mendelssohn: and as we look on him as the herald of a mighty band, a joyous train now about to wreath fresh laurels to the musical honour of our country, we beg to draw the attention of our readers to this peculiarly elegant composition. But in so doing, we will first revert to the orchestral compositions of his model,

These reveal a new perception of the beau ideal, which may be traced from the happy mode adopted in his musical education. Unlike the composers of the present day, he was early initiated in the severities of the grand school. The music of the mind, the language of the soul, as found in the pages of a Bach, was the strong meat of his childhood. Here are no meretricious graces, no clustering

<sup>\*</sup> Whether or not it has been the deficiency of sultable words, that has led to the introduction of a new style of music, need not here be discussed. The Lieder three Werte of Mendelssohn, are, in every sense, the production of a master mind.

ornaments; but all, as free from ostentation as from weakness, stands majestically conspicuous in its own purity—its simple solemnity. From these studies he perceived the necessity of a solid foundation and clear superstructure, and contracted a love of symmetrical design, and perfect keeping from beginning to end. To these characteristics he has blended the exquisite beauties of Beethoven and Weber, without adopting, however, the elaborate detail of the one, or the wayward manerism of the other. He calls into action the broad masses of Beethoven, the elegant and fairy like melody of Weber, but amalgamates with them a contrapuntal dignity which, although inwoven, is ever bold and clear in its proportions. The overture to "The Knight and Mermaid," is perhaps the most perfect specimen of his secular style of composition, an overture which, we presume, suggested to Mr. Pennett the subject of the composition now under review.

It demanded an imagination, not distrustful of its powers, to conjure up the revels of the Naiades, those gnomes who, "with sedged crowns, and ever harm-

less looks,"

"—meet on hill, in dale, forest, or mead, By fancied fountains, or by rushy brook, Or on the beached margent of the sea, To dance their ringlets to the whistling wind."

But Mr. Bennett, with the hand of an enchanter, has summoned up

" A most majestic vision, and Harmonious charmingly."

The perfect calm, the solemn stillness, with which the movement opens, is judiciously contrasted with the delicate motivo, depicting the sportive playsomeness of the nymphs, as they come forth in bright and joyous array. The gradual chiara oscura prepares the mind for the delineation of the passing storm, and is fancifully

conceived, and felicitously pourtrayed.

The episode of the storm—the change from the still evening of summer, in its silence eloquent, to that of the chafed winds, the mantling clouds, the sweeping burricane, and muttering lour of the thunder, reminds us of a similar scene in Mendelssohn's overture to "The Hebrides." The return to nature in her best and balmiest hour, introduces a charming and flowing melody (the cantabile at page 7), which is still more vividly brought out at page 9, in the superstructure, the under subject meandering through the harmonies in quavers. At page 21 is a very clever use of contrapuntal imitation, in conversion, which, indeed, is similar in idea and treatment to the cantabile in the slow movement of Mendelssohn's symphony in C minor. The succession of harmonies at page 13 (four bars from the end), although not orthodox in position, are extremely effective. One of the best points however in the overture, will be found at page 14, bar 17. The iteration of the subject against the bass, with reversed accents in syncopation, bound together with the ingenious harmony in the motivo infra, displays much science, and a just appreciation of the powers of an orchestra.

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F. Wyndham; with Flute Obligato, by Mr. Sedlatzek, Morlacchi. Quintett in E Flat Major, Flute, Mr. Sedlatzek; Oboe Mr. Barret; Clarinet, Mr. Willman; Horn, Sig. Puzzi; and Bassoon, Mr. Baumann, Reicha. Duetto, "E pena troppo barbara," Miss Masson, and Miss F. Wyndham, Niedermayer. Ottet in E Flat Major, Clarinets, Messrs. Willman, and Bowley; Oboes, Messrs. Barret, and Keating; Horns, Messrs. Puzzi and Rae; Bassoons, Messrs. Baumann, and Godfrey, Beethoven. Conductor, M. Dumon. These compositions are superb specimens of modern magnificence, in the school of the German harmonic music, neither too difficult nor too learned to be pleasing; and were listened to by a very full audience with the united sensations of rapture and admiration. The excellence of the scherzo in the opening Quintett particularly claimed attention, it is a receivation of delicate fragrance, and our thanks are due to those who have displayed so much taste and industry in transplanting it to the English concert-room. The Quartett by Spohr went off with a power and unity, neatness and elegance, a sparkling brilliance which demonstrated the consummate taste and judgment of every individual engaged in its execution. Mr. Moscheles has a hand which no difficulties can embarrass, and never once let a single note escape him without meaning. Miss Masson was encored in the song by Winter; Miss Wyndham has considerable talent, natural and acquired, and continues to rise in public estimation. Herr Kroft introduced his old favourite, the fine scena by Schubert.

BLAGROVE'S QUARTETT CONCERTS.—Messrs. Blagrove, Bennett, Gattie, Dando, and Lucas, have renewed their soirées for this season. These youthful candidates for distinction have been stealing their way gradually into estimation, and by confining their exertions solely to compositions of a perpetual and overpowering character, have acquired a more and more perfect unity of expression, an intercommunicable flow of thought and feeling, an enthusiastic exchange of sensibilities, which render their performances, in every sense, a high intellectual treat. They may be said (figuratively) to have scaled together, with a cheerfulness of endurance, many a potentious difficulty, "one shoulder acting as another crutch," crossed many an ugly fell, and every honest and benevolent mind rejoices with them in unaffected congratulations at the prosperous result which now promises to attend the termination of their spirited, but at first starting, uncertain labours. A full audience attended their first meeting, at which the following selection was per-Gattie, Dando, and Lucas—Haydn. Romance, "Abschied Heinrich's des IV. von Gabrielle d'Estrée," Herr Kroff—Tomaschek. Cantata, "From Rosy Bowers," Miss Masson—Purcell. Quartett in F sharp Minor (No. 3, of Op. 70), (dedié à son Altesse Monseigneur le Prince Antoine Radziwil), Messrs Blagrove, Gattie, Dando, and Lucas-Ries. Part II.-Trio in D Major (No. 1, of Op. 70), (dedié à Madame la Comtesse d'Erdödy), Messrs. W. Sterndale Bennett, Blagrove, and Lucas—Beethoven. Canzonet, "Farewell," Miss Masson—Ries. Canzonet, "The Zephyr," Herr Kroff—W. S. Bennett. Double Quartett in E. Minor (Op. 87), Messrs. Blagrove, Gattie, Seymour, Richards, Dando, W. Blagrove, Lucas, and Banister-Spohr. Pianoforte, Mr. W. S. Bennett. least known and least remarkable feature of this scheme, is the quartett by Ries. It was on this occasion, we believe, presented to the English audience for the first time, and if it should turn out to be the only and last, no one will lament the issue. Ries' music here and there partakes of the beautiful, but much of it is in such a style of rueful lamentation, such unnecessary introductions to scenes of darkness and mysticism, such communings with sable, and certainly not awe-inspiring unrealities, that the little good there may be, ceases to appear clothed in the aspect of truth and nature. There is no necessity, that we know of, which compels the composer to shut out the sun from the solemn; he may be serious without being austere, mournful without conjuring up the dismals. The performance which afforded the most universal gratification was the pianoforte trio in D major, the middle movement of which is the germ of the sublime opening to the sinfonia in D minor, No. 9. It is a pure, calm, bright, deep, untroubled landscape, with a most unostentatious and unglaring colouring hanging over the whole, in which is idealized the perfect forms of beauty and repose. Its execution displayed great precision, neatness, and the utmost refinement and delicacy. dislike Spohr's quartetts, the one in D minor the least; but reverence him on the



Hartz mountains, in his nuptial marches, student's chorusses, and other joyous scenes. The "woe and wailing" of his oratorio music, his sobbings and moanings in quartett writing, is as detestable as it is beyond pardon, and we should not much regret the loss of every bar he ever wrote in both styles. The vocal specimens were, for the most, new, but the singers deserved better stuff to feed upon. Miss Masson, in Purcel's Scena, and Herr Kroff, in the canzonet by Mr. Bennett, (which was encored,) delighted the audience by the purity and musician like style of their execution. H. R. H. the Duke of Cambridge, will honour the next concert by his attendance.

New Vocal Society.—The meetings of this society cannot be said to convey a very flattering tribute to British composers; for out of the thirty-one movements given on Thursday last, twenty-six were the production of foreign artists. The dramatic scenes of Bishop, Barnet, Balfe, and Rooke, are banished, to make admission for Weber—and Weber in his most maniacal mood. The English cantata recedes before that of Haydn, from which is selected a scene which the limited resources of the vocal strength of this association ought to have imperatively forbade its presence in the programme. To attempt "The Storm Scene" of the Seasons at this vocal society, is at once a sarcasm on the composer, and a burlesque on the well-known abilities of those who form the orchestra.

The compositions of our native artists included two madrigals, by Morley and Weelkes, which were both encored; two glees, by Horsley and Arne, the latter encored, although the former (the best composition of Horsley, because the freshest) missed a similar compliment. The remaining one was the pianoforte concerto by W. S. Bennett, performed by its composer. It was not more enthusi-

astically applauded than its merits and execution merited.

Choral Harmonic Society.—This society held its usual monthly meeting at the Hanover Square Rooms, on Tuesday evening last. The vocalists were Mr. Sapio, Mr. Leffler, Mr. Ashton, Miss Dolby, Miss Cooper, Miss Flower, Miss S. Flower, and Miss Thompson. The performance consisted of the first part of "The Creation," and a miscellaneous selection, principally from Handel's oratorios. The room was well attended. Mr. Dando led, and Mr. Holderness conducted. Mr. Bevington presided at the organ. Mr. S. Godbe's name appears as chorusmaster—we wish his pupils were more numerous, as then the choruses would prove more effective. The vocal portion of the orchestra seems to us to be rather deficient in comparison to the instrumental.

THE MELODIST'S CLUB.—The first meeting took place on the 22nd inst., when several glees were sung by Messrs. Bellamy, Balfe, Elliott, Atkins, Spencer, Parry, Parry Jun., Wilson, Manvers, &c. Several songs and duets were also sung by Balfe, Parry Jun., Wilson, and Manvers; the latter two, sung a duet from Rooke's opera of Amilie with great spirit; and Wilson gave a Scottish ballad with much humour and effort. Puzzi played a solo on the horn, and Richardson, a fantasia on the flute, accompanied by Schultz on the pianoforte, most admirably, and the musical treat altogether was a very gratifying one. The club intends to give two prizes this season for a song and a duet, the words selected from those, for which medals were given last season.

#### THEATRICAL SUMMARY.

There is a trite proverb which says—" listeners seldom hear good of themselves." We reported last week, on what has hitherto been considered the best authority, that the author of the new play of The Lady of Lyons was a Mr. Calvert. Our authority, himself deceived, misled us—a circumstance, by the bye, which we will take care shall not happen again; and indeed the hoax was a universal one. The mountain took to labour; and out has crept the mouse in the person of Mr. Edward Lytton Bulwer. It were easy to divine why all this mystery was resorted to, were it worth while. Fear, indeed, was "father to the thought." But, in the first place, "the trick on't" should not have been countenanced by the manager; and, in the second, having once given into it, the wiser policy would have been to have suffered the matter to rest as it was.

However, to apply the proverb with which we set out. Had the play been fairly announced as Mr. Bulwer's, he would have been spared the mortification, and very bitter it must have been to him, of having his play praised—on the sole ground of its being supposed the production of a tyro. In fact, every paper which meted out encomium to it, except one which was in the secret, evidently suffers good feeling to overpower its judgment. Had it been the acknowledged writing of an author in high public repute, the standard of criticism would have been raised, and the severe judgment which would have followed, would surely have been less galling than the qualified praise conceded from sympathy with an untried writer. And, in this case, too, he might have comforted himself with the belief that political prejudice, or literary envy had infused the wormwood in any bitter strictures that might have appeared. As it is, he has been compelled to swallow pills, whose gilding could only deceive the most youthful palate.

We bear out the above by extracts from two papers of entirely opposite political principles. The Spectator, speaking of this play, and of the burletta, entitled A Maiden's Fame, or a Legend of Lisbon, now acting at the Adelphi, says, "in both the interest is of serious and romantic character, and in point of composition may be fuirly classed under one head." Further on it continues, "The writing is unequal, and the poetry better for sound than sense; but there are some pretty similies, and many sensible and even witty sayings scattered throughout the dialogue! and the negligence of the style gives it an unstudied air." The John Bull sums up its remarks by observing, "the best property of its poetry is that of conjuring to our memory the sounds of higher strains. It evidences a yearning towards the beautiful. Still it is so weak, that it might almost as well be taken for the utmost efforts of a long-practised, elegant-minded, but feeble writer, as of a neonbyte." Our own brief notice took its colour from the same feeling as the Our own brief notice took its colour from the same feeling as the above; and to a man of spirit, the thunder of all the paper artillery in the world, we should think, must be infinitely less distressing than this perfumed discharge of

sweetmeats and bonbons. The consequences of the hoax to Covent Garden theatre will be unfavourable, we fear; for each party will be cautious in pronouncing judgment on any future unacknowledged production. And, putting politics out of the question, any such play of mark will be a sort of *Vortigern* test, a kind of touchstone which no modern

critic will be "overly fond" of laying hold of.
With the political war on this play we have nothing to do. Thank heaven! we are not "compact of jars," but can pipe and dance with all parties. It is our business, however, to note discords, and accordingly we have pointed one out for the warning of future composers in this line.

Having mentioned the piece called The Maiden's Fame, we must add that it is a production which would have done honour to Mrs. Winifred Jenkins, of immortal memory-it is the quintessence of slipslop. Mackintosh & Co. at Covent Garden, a translation from Moireau et Compagnie, seem to have made an early failure of their speculation. The Rifle Brigade, the new burletta at the Adelphi, makes the house ring with laughter; and The Fatal Secret, at the St. James's, we leave our readers to go and find out for themselves.

## TO THE EDITOR OF THE MUSICAL WORLD.

Sin,-I feel highly gratified in what you have said in your last Number, of the compositions by Frederick Chopin, but in regard to the errors, I have to apologise to you and the musical Public. They were published during my absence in Germany, my assistant relying on the assurance of M. Chopin's "homme d'affaires," of the correctness of "les epreuves corrigées" sent him from Paris. M. Chopin however never corrects his own music, which is the reason why the Parisian editions abound in errors. I beg leave to send you new editions of these works, in which you will perceive the errors have been corrected.

C. R. WESSELL.

Frith Street. 26 Feb., 1838.

I am, Sir, Your obedient, humble servant,

#### MISCELLANEOUS.

HER MAJESTY'S PIANO .- We had the opportunity a few days since of examining one of Zeitter's New Patent Grand Piano Fortes, which has been constructed for the use of the Queen. The instrument is in every respect a magnificent oneits tone brilliant, and its touch smooth and even. Her Majesty, who is not only a good judge of music, but also an accomplished singer and pianoforte player, would, we should think, be much pleased with the admirable manner in which her commission has been executed.

MUSICAL LECTURES.-Mr. Edward Taylor is now delivering a course of lectures on the English opera, at the London Institution.

HUMMEL'S CELEBRATED PIANOFORTE SCHOOL.—We are happy to perceive that the invaluable legacy bequeathed to the rising generation of pianoforte players, by the unrivalled Hummel, in his great work upon that instrument, wherein all that is valuable in precept and example is combined, is now placed within the reach of nearly every student of the pianoforte, by being published in twelve monthly parts, at a moderate price.

Onslow, the celebrated quartett and operatic composer, has just come into a splendid fortune, by the death of the Marchioness de Fontages, to whose only daughter he was married.

Dr. Pepusch -"In one of my visits," says Dr. Burney, "to this venerable master very early in my life, he gave me a short lesson which made so deep an impression, that I long endeavoured to practise it. When I was a young man," said he, "I determined never to go to bed at night, till I knew something that I did not know in the morning."

PRIZE GLEES .- The Western City Glee Club are about to proceed to the adjudication of their prize. The Huddersfield Glee Club have announced their intention of offering a prize, open to all England, for the best glee. The Metropolitan Glee Club have also announced their annual prize, which is, however, injudiciously confined to the members of their society. The Melodist's Club give two prizes this year, for a song and duet.

Messas. Mori and Lindley's third concert takes place this evening.

MR. Moscheles' third soiree takes place to-morrow evening.

GUARDUCCI, on his leaving England told Dr. Burney that the gravity of our taste had been of infinite service to him. "The English," said he, "are such friends to the composer, and to simplicity, that they like to hear a melody in its state, undisguised by change or embellishment; or if, when repeated, riffioramenti are necessary, the notes must be few and well selected, to be honoured with their approbation."
The Italian Opera commences on the 17th instant. Persiani will make her

debût in Bellini's beautiful opera "La Somnambula."

Mr. Goodban's third subscription concert, at Canterbury, will take place on Monday next, for which, Miss Birch and Mr. Parry, junior, are engaged.

CLASSICAL WIND INSTRUMENTAL CONCERTS,-The third concert takes place on Friday, March the 9th.

ROYAL ACADEMY CONCERTS.—Alexander's Feast has been put into rehearsal for the forthcoming concert. This is as it should be: there can be no singing without the study of genuine vocal music. H. R. H. the Duke of Cambridge, attended the rehearsal of Tuesday; also Lord Burghersh, Sir George Clerk, &c. &c. F. Cramer leads, and Mr. Lucas conducts. Cannot something be done to that abominable organ, previous to the production of this oratorio? Its present state is a disgrace to all parties.

OPERATIC INTELLIGENCE.—Benedict, Rooke, and Balfe, the Morning Post states to be severally engaged in the composition of an Opera: that of Balfe's is nearly completed.

RULE BRITANIA.—This air was taken by Dr. Arne from Handel's aria Cedo alla sorte. That of the "Soldier tired of wars alarms," from the celebrated Vo solcando, in the opera of Artaserse composed by Vinci.

#### WEEKLY LIST OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

PIANOFORTE.

Trois Bijoux, No. 1, Le Galop,
No. 2, Rondeau sur un Themed. Auber, No. 3, Rondeau sur une Polonaise di Spohr

Luber, The favourite alrs in Fra Di-Hunten. E CHAPPEL Auber. avolo, arranged as duets by Diabelli, Book 2......Do Select airs from Donizetti's Parisina, 2 Czerny La Ricoroanza, De Strauss. Valses universelles, No 25, Solo. Elsenbahn (Railroad) waltzes Do Chopin. Le Meditation, (new edition.)

Il Lamento e la Consolazione, DITTO Choral and Instrumental Fugues

Nos. 1 and 2........CRAMER LONSDALE

of L Beethoven, Nos. 1 and 2 ...

.....Monro VOCAL. G. Linley. Like a dream of my child-Donnizetti. "Perehe non ho," Roberto G. Linley. JEFFERY ....D'ALMAINE Gems of German Song, Book 2 ......EWER Rosenhaim, Six German Songs.....WESSEL SACRED. MISCELLANEOUS Treatise on Practical Har-Lemoine. 

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SYSTEM OF CHANTING; The whole being so simplified, that all the Congregation may join in the Service,

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#### TO AMATEURS.

T. W. HANCOCK begs to inti-violoncello. Application if by letter, to be di-rected to his residence, 12, Cecil-street; or Covent W. HANCOCK begs to inti-Garden Theatre.

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